

### BOXTED AIRFIELD MUSEUM

### *Uniforms Display*



*L-R: Captain Jack Norton, Tech. Sgt. Eddie Kovalchik, Captain Harry Taylor, Lt.Col. Glenn Grau.*

In 2019 the museum, operated by the Boxted Airfield Historical Group, a registered charity, opened a new Marauder display. This included the new home for the tail section of Mr. Shorty, a B26C Marauder medium bomber, serial 41-35253. This is the largest piece of a Marauder surviving in this country and is on loan from Marks Hall from where it operated on the adjacent airfield at Earls Colne. Boxted was initially a Marauder base for the 386th Bomb Group briefly in 1943 before being replaced by the 354th Fighter Group flying P51 Mustangs, and subsequently the 56th FG with P47 Thunderbolts. All this is related in the museum displays.

A new feature in building three is the recreation of the nose layout of a Marauder.

It features items from Mr Shorty and, additionally, the Radio Operator's and Navigator's positions are represented by relevant equipment.

Recently the museum acquired a collection of second world war military uniforms. This brought with it the need to care for, conserve and display the uniforms in a professional manner. Accordingly, an appeal was launched last year for funds to clean and conserve the uniforms and to display them in professionally constructed showcases equipped with monitoring equipment and humidity control and insect and clothes moth traps and repellent.

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## Grants Awarded

for the financial year 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

<b>St Michael's Church, Braintree</b> <i>Bell restoration</i>	<b>£4,000</b>	<b>St Nicholas Church, Elmdon</b> <i>Rebuilding of Victorian Flint wall</i>	<b>£2,500</b>
<b>Roxwell Revealed</b> <i>Storage equipment for heritage collection</i>	<b>£4,600</b>	<b>St John's Church, Moulsham</b> <i>Organ restoration</i>	<b>£5,000</b>
<b>** Copped Hall Trust</b> <i>Stone columns, Loggia</i>	<b>£10,000</b>	<b>Wendens Ambo Society</b> <i>Archaeology work on Wenden Parva Church</i>	<b>£2,000</b>
<b>All Saints Church, Feering</b> <i>Improve public facilities and restore Organ</i>	<b>£5,000</b>	<b>** Mr David Patient</b> <i>Publication – The Life and Times of John Howard, Maldon Shipwright 1849-1915</i>	<b>£3,500</b>
<b>St Andrew's Church, Shalford</b> <i>Stained Glass conservation and restoration</i>	<b>£2,000</b>	<b>** Boxted Airfield Historical Group</b> <i>Conservation and display of a collection of eight WWII Uniforms in Boxted Airfield Museum</i>	<b>£1,500</b>
<b>St Mary's Church, Newport</b> <i>Conservation of Clerestory windows</i>	<b>£5,000</b>	<b>Clavering Landscape History Group</b> <i>Geophysical survey of Clavering Castle</i>	<b>£400</b>
<b>** Laindon District &amp; Community Archive</b> <i>Road sign and Lectern illustrating the history of The Plotlands, Laindon</i>	<b>£697</b>	<b>St Nicholas Church, Harwich</b> <i>Clock restoration</i>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Pleshey Oral History Group</b> <i>Oral history of the village of Pleshey</i>	<b>£900</b>		
<b>Colchester Arts Centre</b> <i>Revealing Stained Glass windows at St Mary-At-The-Walls Church</i>	<b>£3,000</b>		

**\*\* Featured in this Newsletter**

Do you have some  
**spare time?**  
Could you spare a few  
**hours a week?**

Do you have admin skills,  
financial skills or social media  
marketing skills?

We are looking for two volunteers  
who are passionate about assisting  
the Trust in preserving the history  
and heritage of our beloved County.

If you feel you can help please turn  
to page 7 for more details.

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## BOXTED AIRFIELD MUSEUM *Uniforms Display*



*L-R: Sgt. Darwin Morse, Private Christine Warren, Aircraftwoman Marjorie Phillips, 2nd Lt. Earl Seagars.*

The uniforms include that of Lt. Colonel Glenn Grau, CO of 556BS operating Marauders out of Chipping Ongar and of Corporal Marty Thibo, initially in the Armaments section of 387BG, then a base military policeman in the 53rd Air Service Group at Chipping Ongar.

Female uniforms include Private Christine Warren of the ATS who, from the grenade badge on her tunic, and shoulder badges, was attached to Anti-Aircraft Command. She may have worked on Royal Artillery Ack-ack control at Blake Hall. She married Sgt. Murriel Turner, a USAAF 53rd Air Service Group medic on 13th September 1944.

There is also the tunic and flying jacket of Captain Jack Norton, a Signals Corps officer assigned to the 354th FG at Boxted. He went ashore on Omaha Beach on D-Day to establish a forward operating base for the 353rd FS and eventually became the Squadron Adjutant.

This uniforms display would not have been possible without a generous grant from **Essex Heritage Trust**.

Additionally, we are grateful for grants from the Friends of Historic Essex, and the Essex Society for Archaeology & History, as well as donations from our members in the UK and USA.

Readers are invited to visit the museum normally open on the last Sunday of each month from March to October, plus 11 & 12 September 2021, 10.00-16.00. Admission donation £4. Located off Langham Lane, Langham, near Colchester CO4 5NW. Light refreshments and souvenirs are available.

*See further details on museum website regarding our COVID requirements for visitors.*

**[www.boxted-airfield.com](http://www.boxted-airfield.com)**

*John Camp, Trustee & Curator  
of the Marauder Collection*

# LAINDON AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY ARCHIVE

## The Plotlands: Alexandra Road

**The Plotlands**

The Plotlands was a community of people who resided in Laindon between 1890s and 1980s, located predominantly in the South West of Laindon.

The Plotland properties were built by families (mainly from London's East End) who bought individual plots as free holdings. Although originally intended as holiday homes, the Second World War meant that many families came to live in their Plotland homes permanently. The huts and houses were made from various salvaged materials and structures: army huts, old railway coaches, sheds, shanties and chalets, which evolved over time.

This area in Victoria Park was sold as plots in 1904 by land agent, Thomas Helmore and became part of his 'Manor House Estate'. Alexandra Road never had a road sign but there were five bungalows along its length: The Retreat, Spion Kop, Pendennis, Rosedean and Horton. The road was used as a short cut from Buckenham's Farm as it led further into Laindon. Alexandra Road was surrounded by open fields and farmland.

**Did you know?**

Most residents grew their own vegetables, kept chickens, ducks, goats and even pigs. There were no amenities until the early 1930s. Gas was installed as far as Pendennis but it didn't extend up to Spion Kop, where Calor Gas cylinders were used. There were never any main drains for sewage, refuse collections, running water (wells were used) or streetlights. Electricity was connected in 1957 and telephones a little later.

In Victoria Park today you can still find remnants from the Plotland period. There are two wells now located in shrubbery, one was initially outside the kitchen of 'The Retreat' and the other was in the back garden of Pendennis. In the north west part of the park, as you head to Ford Dunton Technical Centre, you can find an old post, which dates back to 1910. This post was part of the Farm House gate that was the entrance to the Richards Family dairy farm that was operational between 1920s to 1940s.

**Timeline:**

- 1801: Laindon population stood at 242
- 1870: Agricultural Depression
- 1888: Laindon Railway station opened
- 1890: Shops open on Laindon High Road
- 1896: Laindon Hotel was built
- 1901: Laindon population stood at 408
- 1928: Laindon High School opened
- 1925: Fortune of War Hotel opened
- 1931: Laindon population stood at 4,552
- 1949: Basildon designated as New Town
- 1969: Laindon Shopping Centre opens
- 1984: The Haven Museum opens to the public
- 2001: Laindon Library opens to the public
- 2011: Laindon population stood at 11,367
- 2017: Laindon Place development approved

Partnerships: Essex Heritage Trust, Basildon Council, Basildon - Billericay - Merford

Laindon and District Community Archive (LDCA) is a community of local volunteers who aim to collate and capture photos, memories, stories and historical information related to the local area. Laindon in Basildon has a rich history which includes the unique plotland community which resided in the area between the 1890s and 1980s. The Plotlanders were a DIY community who acquired plots of land through auction after the agricultural depression in the late 19th century. Building weekend retreats and smallholdings through alternative processes and using local salvaged materials, the Plotlanders often held 'back to the land' ambitions realised through small holdings that included vegetable plots and farm animals.

In 1949 Basildon was designated as a New Town; an act that led to the compulsory purchase and demolition of the Plotland areas. Today you can still find bricks in the ground, in the form of foundations, boundary walls, wells and other Plotland remnants. Nina Humphrey a LDCA researcher was a plotland child who lived in what is now Victoria Park in Laindon where today you can still find two wells now located in shrubbery.

One was initially outside the kitchen of 'The Retreat' and the other was in the back garden of Pendennis. In the north west part of the park, as you head to Ford Dunton Technical Centre, you can find an old post which dates back to 1920. This post was part of the Farmhouse gate that was the entrance to the Richards Family dairy farm that was operational between 1919 and the 1940s.

To celebrate this lesser known local history, we propose to permanently install an information lectern written through Nina's personal story accompanied by a road sign that reads Alexandra Road, which was the original plotland road that ran through Victoria Park, that unfortunately no longer exists. We hope the lectern and road sign will offer locals a chance to stop and learn about this unique history while also putting a permanent marker back into the land to make sure this history is not forgotten.

We would like to thank **Essex Heritage Trust** and the Trustees for the support in making this possible.

**Shaun C Badham**  
Lead Artist



**An account by the author DAVID PATIENT on his book  
 “ONE OF HOWARD’S” The life and times of John Howard  
 Maldon Shipwright 1849-1915. A history of shipbuilding in Maldon.  
 Jardine Press Ltd 2020**

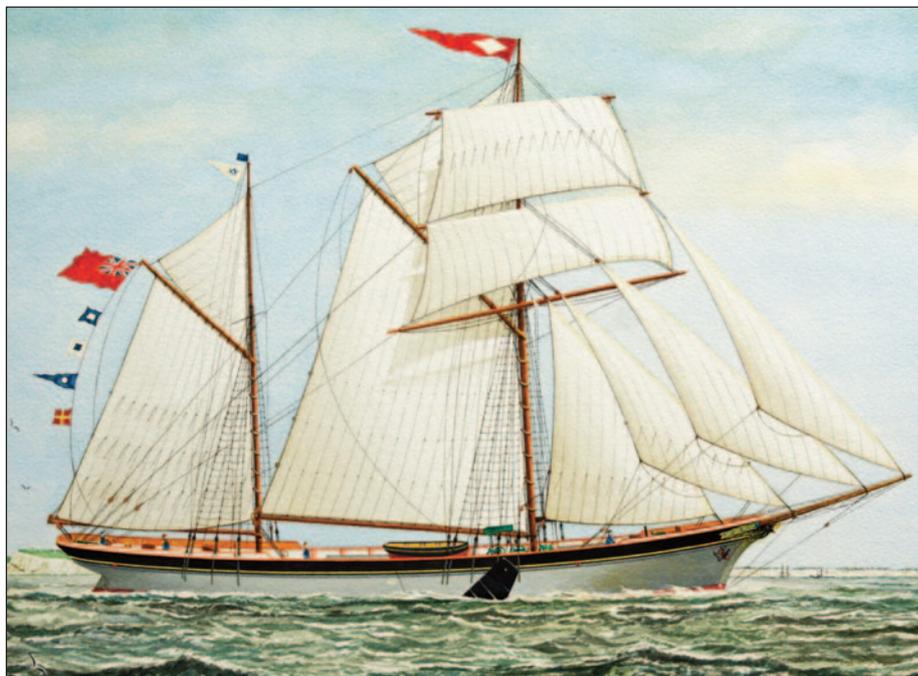
On my retirement from shipwrighting after 40 odd years, I decided to do something with my research into sailing barges and maritime Maldon. Being amused by hearing the comment that “everyone has a book in them and that is where it should stay” I pressed on. With the help of copies of the Maldon Express and the British Newspaper Archive online I was able to piece together the ‘life’ of John Howard, the most respected Essex bargebuilder.

John Howard needed to be put into context and, in particular, it was necessary to explore the apprenticeship system that sustained shipbuilding in the town throughout the centuries. This entailed late Monday nights at the Essex Records Office. Working as a shipwright at Walter Cook and Son’s bargeyard at the Hythe I was entrenched in the local maritime traditions.

Further with regard to the passing down of skills, I had some minor connection to John Howard in that I was taught by shipwrights who were taught by shipwrights who worked for Howard.

In my time at Cook’s we were chiefly responsible for rebuilding and re-rigging motor barges which had been sold out of trade. I was a mate on the charter barges with bargemen who had worked under sail and surrounded on the Maldon waterfront and the Queens Head by the local retired fishermen.

With this background I was able to establish my own boatbuilding business and barge yard in Maldon,



initially building barge boats in John Howard’s blacksmith’s shed. On writing the book I was encouraged by Jamie and Catherine Dodds of the Jardine Press in Wivenhoe.

Catherine was entirely responsible for the beautiful design of the book and as a perfectionist saw to the entire production. Her layout and the careful placing of the illustrations I hope have made it easier to wade through all my pedantic text.

I was told at the Essex Record Office that if I was to be taken seriously I must include an extensive reference and bibliography. I had unfortunately not taken enough care in noting my source material and gathering all this together became the hardest part of finishing the book. However it was worth the effort as I have received

encouraging reviews from the Society of Sailing Barge Research and ‘The Mariner’s Mirror’, the prestigious quarterly journal of the Society for Nautical Research.

The book was published with the generous help from both **Essex Heritage Trust** and the Hervey Benham Charitable Trust. The benefit of their grants cannot be under-estimated given the problems of starting to sell three pallet loads of books during the two lock downs.

On that note a signed copy of the book can be purchased by members and friends of **Essex Heritage Trust** at £35.00 including postage.

[david.patient@btinternet.com](mailto:david.patient@btinternet.com)

*David Patient*  
Author

## THE LOGGIA – COPPED HALL



*Photo credit to Peter Gamble*

The Loggia was constructed in 1895 as part of the extensive alterations to Copped Hall initiated by the owner Mr. E.J. Wythes. Sadly, Copped Hall was burnt out in 1917 – although the Loggia was undamaged. Mr. Wythes died in 1949 and the Estate was sold soon afterwards. The new owners allowed anything of value to be stripped from around the mansion. Lord Chelmer purchased the columns and entablature from the Loggia, erecting some of these in his garden at Bullwood Hall, while other parts were erected at his later house at Margaretting. We managed to obtain the return of six of the ten columns, together with parts of the entablature, thanks to both of the new owners. We then had the four missing columns carved out of stone.

The Loggia is situated against the inside of the southern forecourt screen wall and forms the eastern side of an enclosed garden adjacent to the south front of the mansion. The garden is contained on the south side by a yew hedge and on the west side by another screen wall. The central gateway in the Loggia is the formal entrance to Copped Hall Gardens from the mansion forecourt.

Once inside, visitors walk along a central path and out

through the western gates into the main Copped Hall Gardens. The enclosed garden also acts as an outdoor space for events held in the adjacent ground floor room in the mansion with the Loggia providing a sheltered west facing sitting area. On the back wall of the Loggia we have fitted eight large notice boards. The boards either side of the central entrance will be used for displaying information about **Essex Heritage Trust**. The remainder of the notice boards will accommodate large photographs of the various structures that once existed in this area.

Diagonally opposite the Loggia are the remains of the large Winter-garden, which is now under restoration, and immediately opposite is the masonry screen wall that once supported a glazed corridor.

We are enormously grateful to **Essex Heritage Trust** for their recent grant of £10,000 in addition to their earlier grant in 2013 of the same amount, all to reinstate the Loggia. The whole restoration will be credited to **Essex Heritage Trust** for all time.

*Alan Cox, Chairman  
The Copped Hall Trust*

## CAN YOU HELP US CONTINUE OUR WORK?

We are keen to recruit two volunteers to help us manage the Trust. If you have some relevant experience this could be an ideal way to further your interest in preserving and promoting the County's heritage.

**Background:** Essex Heritage Trust was created in 1990 to award grants for projects which conserve, explain and make accessible the County's heritage. Since its founding the Trust has awarded over 500 grants totalling more than £1.3m. Trustees meet three times a year to discuss applications.

Administrative support from Essex County Council will no longer be available after the end of this year, so the Trust is inviting volunteers with a keen interest in the County's heritage to take over some of this work, enabling the Trust to continue to devote all its financial resources to awarding grants.

### Volunteer Grants and Supporters Administrator

**Purpose of role:**

To assist the Managing Trustee in managing grants, promoting and encouraging support for the Trust.

**Main activities:**

- Advising enquirers on how to apply, timing and conditions of grants and whether an application would be in line with the Trust's objects.
- Processing applications through the stages of preliminary consideration by the Management Committee, discussion by the Trustees, notification of result, payment and follow-up of results.
- Keeping records of grants and archiving appropriate material.
- Regularly communicating with supporters and helping organise the Trust's Annual Meeting.
- Producing promotional material and on-line communications to encourage applications for grants and to attract new supporters.

**Commitment of time:**

Up to five or six hours per week, but flexible during the year following the grants cycle.

**Location:**

The Trust's office is at Cressing Temple and the role is based there, but it should be possible to work from home for some of the time.

### Volunteer Financial Administrator

**Purpose of role:**

To provide assistance to the Hon Treasurer and Trustees in managing the Trust's income and expenditure and financial records.

**Main activities:**

- Keeping financial records and helping prepare the annual accounts. Managing the annual income and expenditure budget.
- Collecting supporters' subscriptions and donations.
- Managing the Trust's bank accounts.
- Providing financial updates for the Trustees.

**Commitment of time:**

Up to five or six hours per week, but flexible during the year following the grants cycle.

**Location:**

The Trust's office is at Cressing Temple and the role is based there, but it should be possible to work from home for some of the time.

**If you feel you can help us in either of these roles**

Please contact: Mrs Sharon Hill  
[mail@essexheritagetrust.co.uk](mailto:mail@essexheritagetrust.co.uk) or  
 Tel. 01376 585794



Income and expenditure may be summarised as follows:	2019/20 £000	2018/19 £000
Income from investments	70	65
Subscriptions, Donations and Legacy received	6	4
Aggregate income	76	69
Less: Administrative cost	14	14
Available for grants	62	55
Grants (Net)	47	54
Net Surplus for the year	15	1
Realised and Unrealised net losses/gains on investments	-280	-17
Value of the Trust's funds - at the beginning of the year	1,560	1,577
- at the end of the year	1,295	1,560

The Trust's grant distribution policy (subject to the performance of the Trust's investments) continues to be that an aggregate amount of up to £60,000 be set aside for grants each year. Whilst income alone may not achieve the desired target, the value of the Trust's investments continues to support this policy.

At the time of publication of this Newsletter, there have been some reductions in the value of the Trust's investments caused by the market reactions to the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic. However unless significant permanent falls in values occur, the Trustees desire to continue the current grant distribution policy.

Copies of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020, from which the above information has been extracted, have been subject to examination by an independent qualified accountant. Copies of the accounts may be obtained, on request, from the Trust office.

**Peter J Mamelok DL FCA, Honorary Treasurer**

## Be a Friend of Essex Heritage Trust

Since 1990, our members' generous support and financial contribution to the Trust has enabled us to award over 500 grants, totalling over £1.3 million.

It is clear that you are helping to preserve our rich and diverse heritage and making it accessible for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of Essex and our many visitors.

With your help we can continue to ensure that valuable buildings, artefacts, objects, records, memories or areas of great beauty are not spoilt or lost forever.

If you wish to become a Friend on an annual basis (£25) or become a Life Friend (£250), take out Corporate membership (£150 per year) or make a Gift Aid donation, please contact our Administrator at the office or visit the website.

## Trustees

**Chairman:** Mr J Douglas-Hughes OBE DL **Managing Trustee:** Mr B J Moody

**Honorary Treasurer:** Mr P J Mamelok DL FCA

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Essex, Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst

Councillor Eddie Johnson, Chairman, Essex County Council,

Rt Hon Lord Petre KCVO JP MA Dr J Bettley JP DL FSA Mr M F Pertwee

Mr R H Wollaston Mrs S Brice Mrs K Twitchen OBE

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